

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01164 161256Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 DHA-02 ACDA-07 /086 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4917  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1164

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IS  
SUBJECT: RABIN MEETING WITH HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY

REFS: TEL AVIV 873, TEL AVIV 888

1. YITZHAK MINERBI, WHO WAS THE LAST ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO IVORY COAST, AND IS NOW DIRECTOR FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN MFA, HAS PROVIDED FURTHER COMMENT ON THE GENEVA MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER RABIN AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN TALKS, HE HAD BRIEFED RABIN BEFOREHAND.

2. HE DESCRIBED HOUPHOUET AS HAVING TRIED HIS HAND BEFORE, ALBEIT UNSUCCESSFULLY, IN MAJOR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AS A SELF-STYLED LEADER OF THE FORCES OF MODERATION, FIRST WHEN HE BECAME INVOLVED ON THE SIDE OF BIAFRA IN THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR, AND NEXT WHEN HE TRIED TO LAUNCH A DIALOGUE BETWEEN BLACK AFRICA AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE MEETING IN GENEVA REFLECTED "THE OLD MAN'S AMBITION TO USE HIS STATURE AND INFLUENCE TOWARD ONE MORE PEACE GESTURE BEFORE LEAVING THE SCENE." HOUPHOUET IS RELUCTANT TO YEILD  
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THE MANTLE OF BLACK AFRICAN SPOKESMAN ON THE MIDDLE EAST TO SENEGALESE PRESIDENT LEOPOLD SENGHOR.

3. HOUPHOUET, HE SAID, HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FRIEND OF ISRAEL AND BELIEVES THAT BY SEEKING TO MODIFY THE ONE-SIDED AFRICAN SUPPORT OF THE ARABS AGAINST ISRAEL, HE CAN IMPROVE CHANCES FOR A MORE MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE.

TO THIS END, HE HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE FOR MEETING RABIN AND HAD INVITED ISRAELI DOVES AND MODERATE PLO ELEMENTS TO TALK WITH HIM.

4. HOUPHOUET HAD ENCOURAGED ISRAEL TO MAINTAIN PERIODIC CONTACTS AT THE GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL BY INVITING ISRAELI OFFICIALS WHOM HE HAS KNOWN, SUCH AS MINERBI, TO VISIT HIM. MOREOVER, TO DEMONSTRATE THE EARNESTNESS OF HIS GOOD WILL, HE HAD INVITED ISRAEL TO UPGRADE ITS REPRESENTATION IN THE ISRAELI INTERESTS SECTION OF THE BELGIAN EMBASSY IN ABIDJAN. IN RESPONSE, ISRAEL'S NEW REPRESENTATIVE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE PERSONAL RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

5. MINERBI DID NOT THINK THAT IVORY COAST COULD OR WOULD BREAK RANKS WITH OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND REOPEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS SOON, BUT WOULD CONTINUE TRYING TO PERSUADE AT LEAST ONE OTHER FRIENDLY FRANCOPHONE COUNTRY AND ONE OR TWO ANGLOPHONE COUNTRIES TO COORDINATE SUCH A STEP, IF AND WHEN THE TIME COMES. SUCCESS WAS NOT FOR TOMORROW, BUT HOUPHOUET APPEARS TO BE WILLING TO CONTINUE HIS PERSONAL DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. MINERBI ADMITTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER USHER MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT LESS SANGUINE ABOUT SUCH A CAMPAIGN, BUT NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL CONTINUES TO SUPPORT CLOSER RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. DUNNIGAN

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, IS, (HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, FELIX), (RABIN, YITZHAK)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009